

What to do if you find a Deer Fawn



Every year, wildlife rehabilitators care for healthy fawns that are mistakenly thought to be orphaned. Learn how to tell the difference between a healthy wild fawn from one that really needs your help.

What you should do

If you find a baby deer that you think may be an orphan:

- If the fawn is lying quietly and appears uninjured, leave it alone. It is normal for a mother deer to leave her baby alone for periods of time. Remember that the mother deer will be wary of you, so your presence in the area could discourage her from returning. Leave the area.
- Keep pets away from the area.
- If you think the fawn is not being cared for by its mother, return the next day to check on it. If it is in the exact same spot and bleating (crying out) or attempting to follow people, it may be orphaned.
- If you do believe the fawn is orphaned, or if it is injured, contact a wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible.

What you shouldn't do

- Don't touch the fawn. If you have already handled it, find a towel, rub it in the grass, and wipe the fawn down to remove your scent.
- Don't move the fawn. If you have moved it, return it to its original location, unless the area is unsafe. If the fawn is dangerously close to a road, move it to the side.
- **Don't attempt to capture and care for the fawn yourself. It is ILLEGAL to keep wildlife without a permit.** If it is orphaned or injured, contact a wildlife rehabilitator for assistance. It is important to handle orphaned deer carefully and minimize human contact to give them the best chance of returning to the wild.



Key Facts about Fawns

- Mother deer leave their fawns alone for long periods. To avoid attracting predators, a mother may only return a few times a day to nurse her young.
- Fawns are unable to follow their mothers for the first two weeks of life. They are cat-sized when born, and it is normal for them to look small and weak.
- While the mother is away, the fawn will typically lie quietly in vegetation waiting for her to return.
- Every year, wildlife rehabilitators care for healthy fawns that are mistakenly thought to be orphaned. Although well-intentioned, these attempts to "rescue" fawns do them more harm than good by removing them from their mother's care.



The fawn's camouflage and lack of scent keep it hidden from potential predators.

When to get help

- The deer is obviously injured (bleeding, broken limb, following you).
- You know the fawn is an orphan (you see a dead adult nearby).
- The fawn is lying on its side, or wandering and crying.

Who to call

If a young animal is truly orphaned or injured, it needs prompt attention!

Contact the BC SPCA's wildlife hotline for more information or to locate a wildlife rehabilitation facility: 1-855-6BC-SPCA (1-855-622-7722)



You can help wildlife now

An injured or orphaned animal's best chance for success is to be cared for by a wildlife rehabilitation centre. Help us care for wild animals in need at www.wildarc.com

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